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DEVELOPMENT OF AN IDENTITY
PROGRAM FOR THE INTERNATIONAL
NARCOTICS CONTROL BOARD,
UNITED NATIONS, GENEVA, SWITZERLAND

ELIZABETH SIMON

MAY 1976

NATIONS UNIES

ORGANISME INTERNATIONAL DE CONTRÔLE
DES STUPEFIANTS



UNITED NATIONS

INTERNATIONAL NARCOTICS CONTROL
BOARD

Télégrammes: NARCOTROL GENEVE

Palais des Nations
CH-1211 GENEVE 10

RE: N-1
(à rattacher dans la réponse)

12 May 1976

Dear Mr. Remington,

We have been informed that you are the Chairman of the College of Fine and Applied Arts of the Rochester Institute of Technology. Miss Elizabeth Simon, a student at the RIT, has undertaken a project of designing a symbol for the International Narcotics Control Board. We have just received the end product of her work and are deeply impressed by the insight she displayed into the role which the Board occupies in the international drug control system and the high quality of the design submitted.

When I had the opportunity of meeting Miss Simon, it was obvious to me that she was not only interested in the mechanics of designing such a symbol but also in the operations of the body with which she was working. I am sure that such thoroughness will stand her in good stead in her future professional career.

The high quality of Miss Simon's project reflects most favourably on the instruction which she received at the Rochester Institute of Technology. Allow me to express my appreciation for the assistance and supervision you have given to her in this project. I shall take pleasure in presenting it to members of the INCB when they meet in Geneva later this month.

Yours sincerely,

J. Dittert
Secretary of the Board

Mr. R. Roger Remington
Chairman
College of Fine and Applied Art
Rochester Institute of Technology
One Lomb Memorial Drive
Rochester NY 14623

Development of an Identity Program
for the International Narcotics Control Board,
United Nations, Geneva, Switzerland

by Elizabeth Simon

Candidate for the Master of Fine Arts
in the College of Fine and Applied Arts
of the Rochester Institute of Technology

May, 1976

Advisor: R. Roger Remington

Approved 5/25/1976
Name Illegible

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

I.	<u>Thesis Committee</u>	<u>i</u>
II.	<u>Introduction</u>	<u>ii</u>
III.	<u>Research Phase and Orientation</u>	<u>1</u>
	A. Background of Client	
	B. Time in Switzerland	
	1. Discussion with Members	
	2. Defining the Problem	
	3. Discussion of the Symbol	
IV.	<u>Design Phase</u>	<u>4</u>
	A. First Sketches	
	B. Other Possibilities	
	C. Refinement of Symbol	
	D. Analysis of Symbol	
V.	<u>Technical Aspects</u>	<u>23</u>
	A. Organization of Elements	
	B. Typographical Considerations	
	C. Mechanical Equipment	
	D. System of Measurement	
VI.	<u>Conclusion</u>	<u>25</u>
VII.	<u>Appendices</u>	<u>26</u>
	A. Appendix I The Applications	
	B. Appendix II The Grid	
	C. Appendix III A History of the INCB	

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

- A. Early Drawings
- B. Early Drawings
- C. Experiments with other Ideas
- D.-I. Study of Flasks
- J. Experiments with Perspective
- K. Progression of Pill to Present Form
- L. Variations on the Final
- M. Variations with Enclosure
- N. Final Symbol
- O. Roughs for Brochure and Poster
- P. Preliminary for Brochure and Poster
- Q. Letterhead
- R. Envelope and Business Card
- S. Brochure
- T. Inside of Brochure
- U. Inside of Brochure
- V. Poster

THESIS COMMITTEE

R. Roger Remington
James L. Bare
Robert S. Kerr

INTRODUCTION

This thesis has addressed itself to the design needs of an organization within the United Nations, The International Narcotics Control Board, referred to in the following pages as the INCB. A detailed history and background of this organization is to be found in Appendix III.

RESEARCH PHASE

The Board's permanent headquarters are located in Geneva, Switzerland. My contacts there were people I had met during a three year stay in Geneva as a student. It was a complaint from these people concerning the Board's anonymity and lack of visibility within the international community which lead me to feel that here might be fertile ground for a thesis project in Graphic Design.

Aside from my personal interest in such matters, I believed the Board to be fulfilling an important role, one from which the entire world could benefit. In addition I knew there existed a need for a Graphic Designer at the United Nations, one who could speak the language and had experience in an international context. I hoped that my involvement with the INCB would result in a full time professional post. I liked what they stood for, and in January of 1976 I went to Geneva to spend over a month meeting with members of the INCB and further exploring their problem. This was accomplished through extensive reading on my part and detailed conversation with key members.

I learned that the INCB deals with a semi-public audience: other United Nations agencies and the governments of member nations. I was told that at international conferences around the world, officers of the INCB were startled to discover that delegates frequently had no knowledge of the function and purpose of the INCB. Some had not even been aware that the Board existed. Until the present time there has been no attempt by the United Nations or the INCB to educate people on this matter.

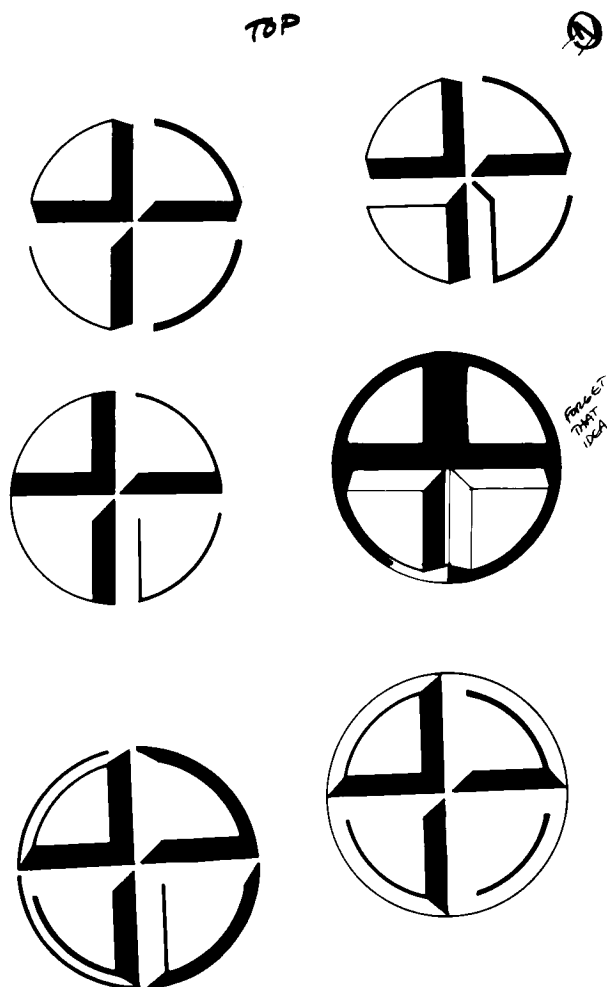
During my discussion with various members much time was devoted to the image or symbol which would represent the Board. From these sessions came suggestions such as: use of an opium capsule or poppy, a regular oval shaped capsule, and a syringe or hypodermic needle. Further talk revealed their discomfort with the syringe. They felt it was overused, rather negative, and most of all had too many "scary" and even "hysterical" connotations attached to it. I dismissed the possibility of using the opium poppy after some research on my own. It became apparent that an image of the poppy evoked no response of recognition on the part of most people both inside and outside of the United Nations. It was this sort of feedback which suggested the image of a pill as being the most

universally recognized as representing a drug. This was the image which to most people simply communicated "drugness" without any of the negative, sensational qualities suggested by the others.

Because the tablet was not a specific drug, it would allow for the growth of the INCB into other areas of drug control. Already they have branched out from narcotics control to the regulation of hallucinogens (LSD etc.). Control of antibiotics in the future seems a likely step. Antibiotics, to a large extent, are in tablet form.

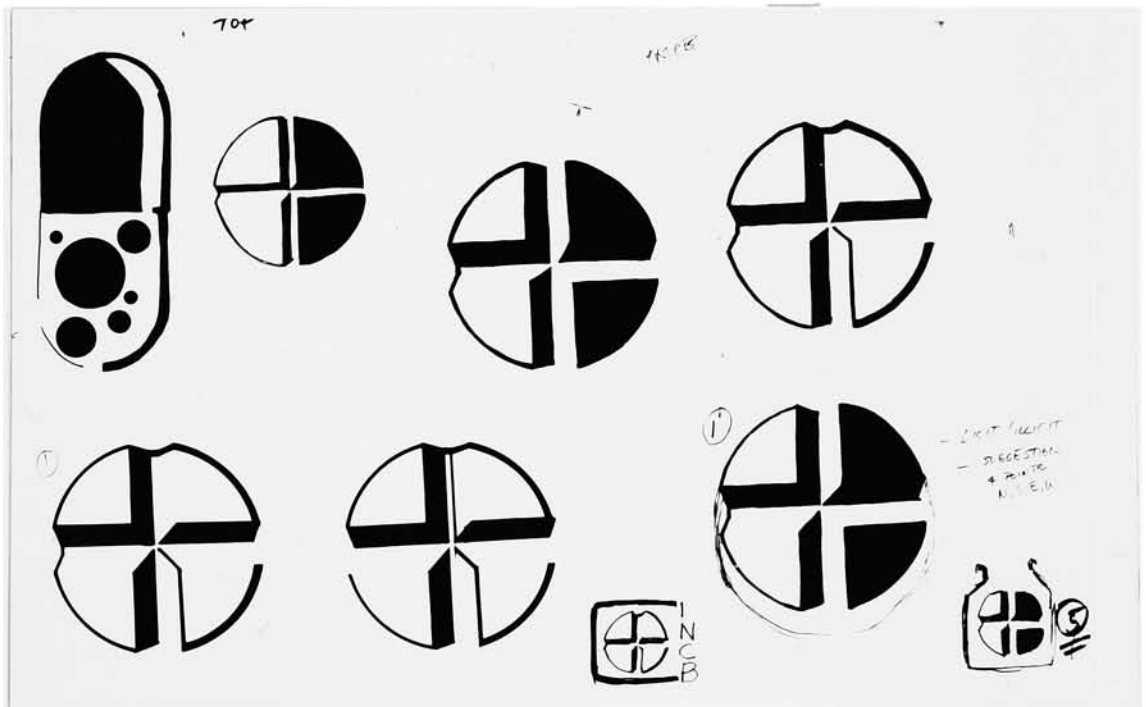
DESIGN PHASE

While in Geneva I secured a book with photographs of the 300 most abused drugs. Many of these drugs were in capsule form, but a majority displayed a double-crossed scoring on the top. I began line studies based on the shadows created by these deep cutting bevels.



A.

All my sketches were of a "bird's-eye" view.
 I tried to capture the patterns created as I
 moved the light source. The problem lay in
 minimizing the impact of the cross, with its
 obviously unrelated associations, and reducing
 the feeling of quarters or wedges which one
 experiences when viewing these early sketches.

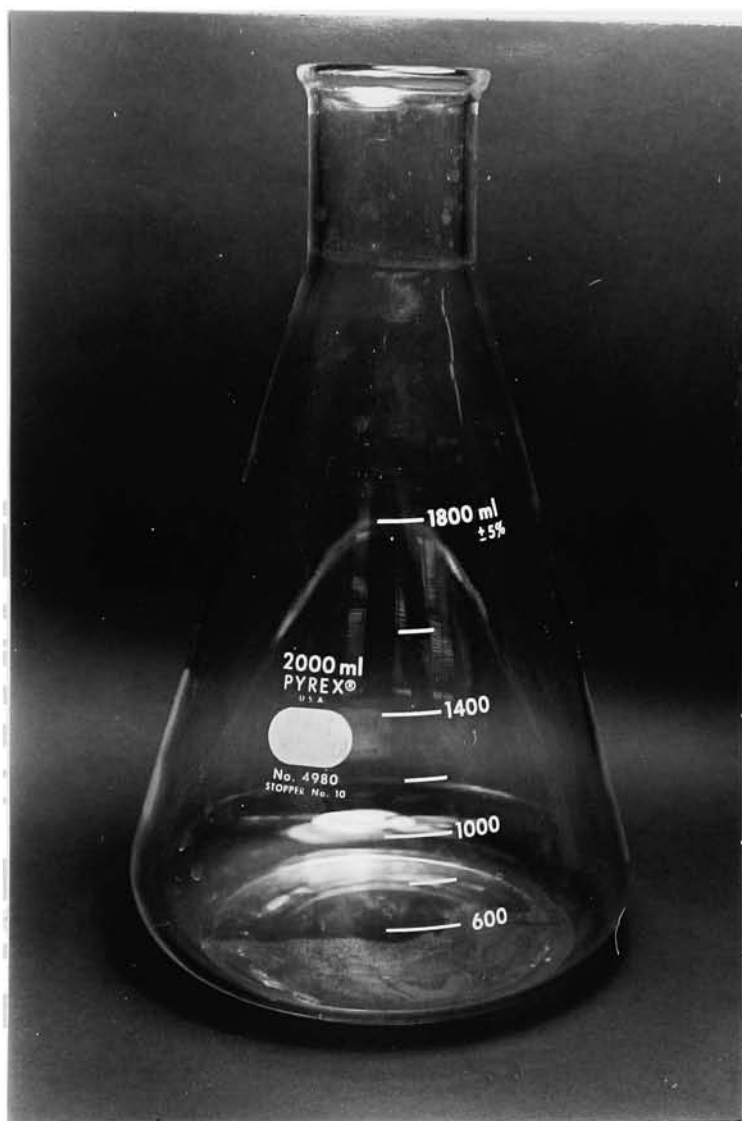


B.

While being convinced that the image of a pill was perfectly suited, I also knew that the tablet standing alone would not communicate control. I experimented with two heavy lines enclosing the pill. These lines were intended to represent two hands, symbolically the hands of mankind.

Upon my return I was encouraged by my professors to explore other possibilities for a symbol before settling too quickly with the tablet. Perhaps there were other less literate solutions I had overlooked. A composite photograph of the resulting sketches is seen in the following.

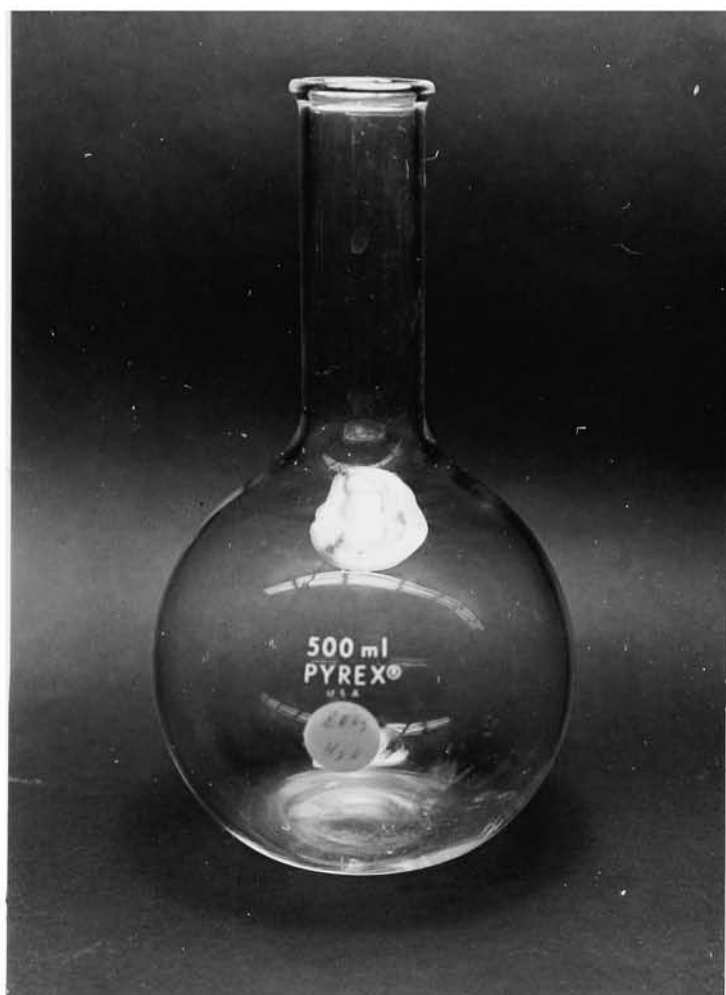
Of these I was particularly interested in the chemists' flask. I devoted a good deal of time and effort to this and produced a series of "photographic sketches". This was accomplished with the cooperation of the Chemistry Department at RIT. The association with chemistry, however, proved to be exactly the weakness with the flask concept. People read "chemistry" and "chemicals", not drugs and control.



D.



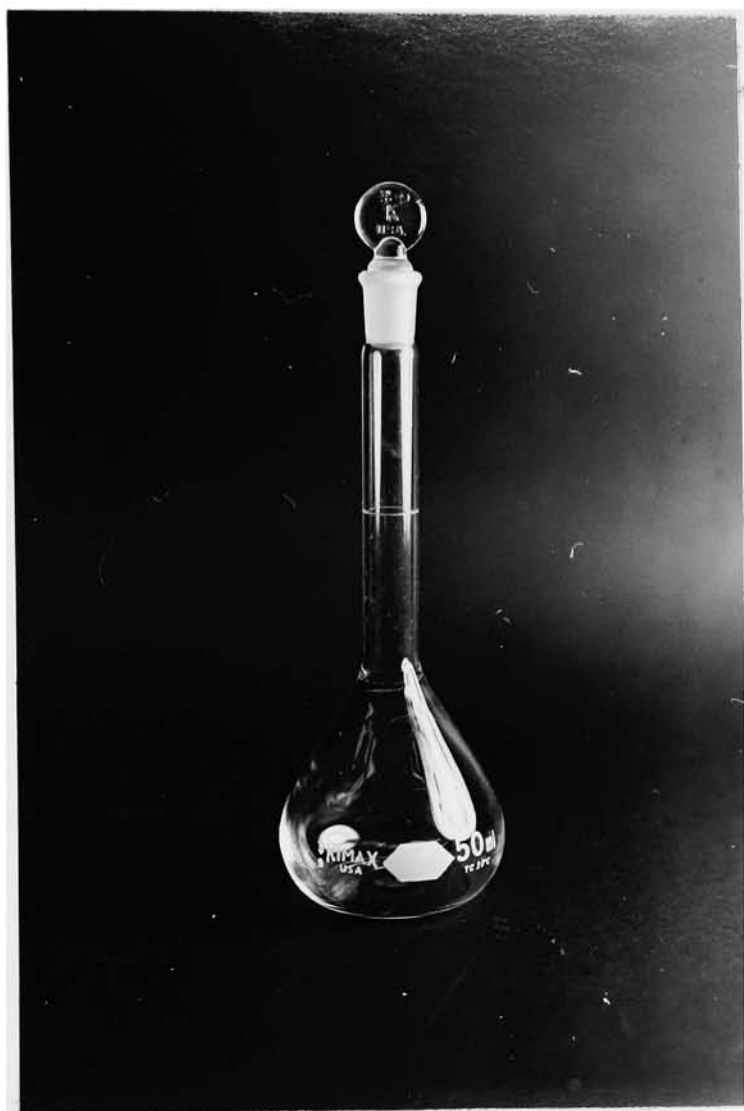
E.



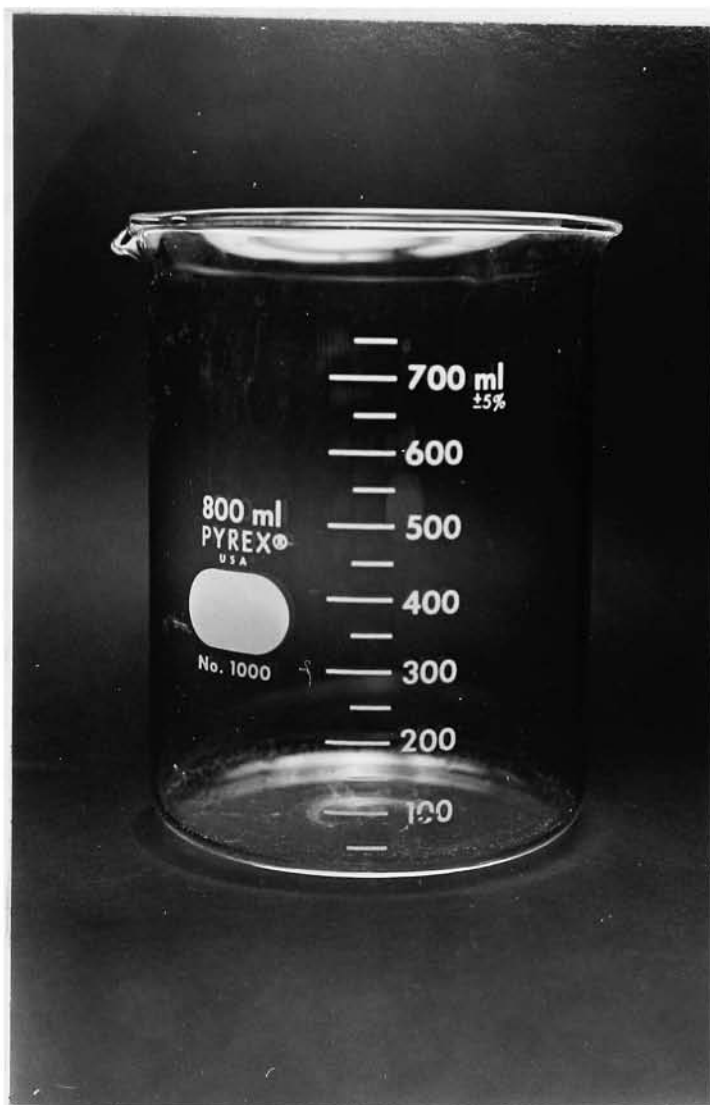
F.



G.

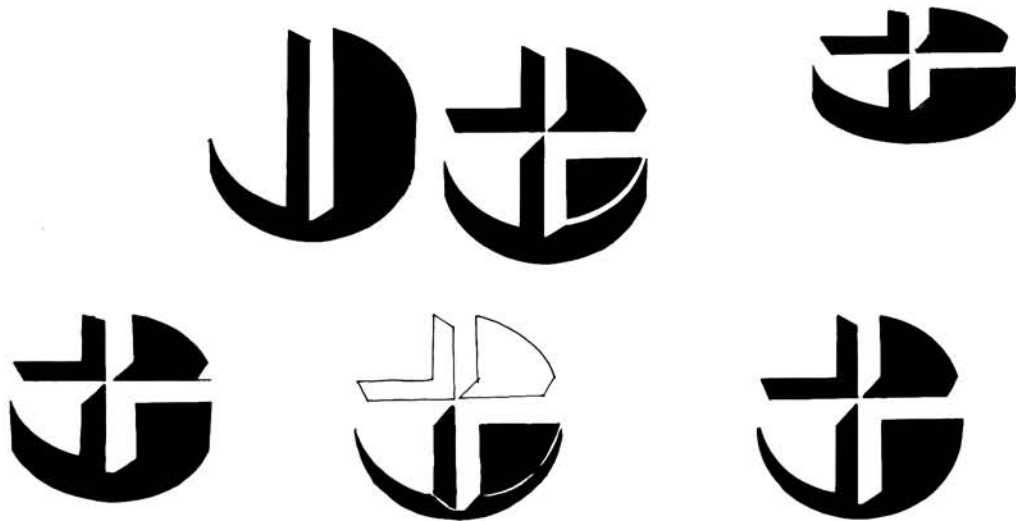


H.



I.

After further discussion with my professors I returned to the task of developing a symbol based on the early drawings of a tablet. Whether the diversion had been a deliberate ploy on the part of my instructors I don't know. It had, however, given me a rest from the early idea, and when I returned to it I viewed it in a new light. I experimented with other angles aside from the established and static birds-eye. I also began to curve the top of the pill upwards, thereby lessening the association with the straight lines of the Christian cross.



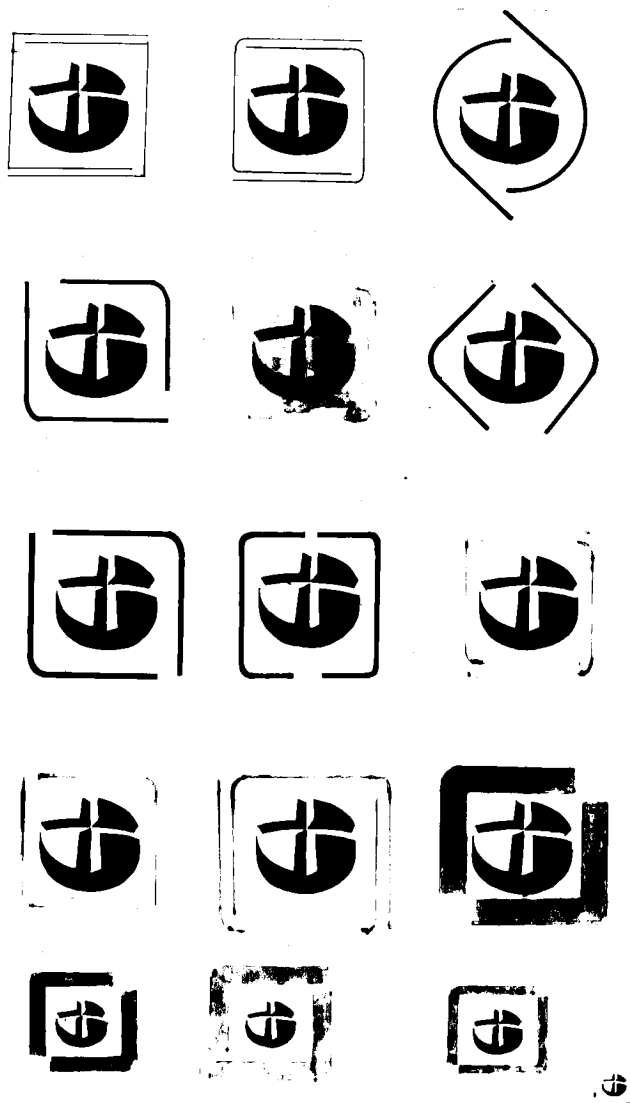


K.



L.

At the same time I was employing various solutions for the enclosure problem.

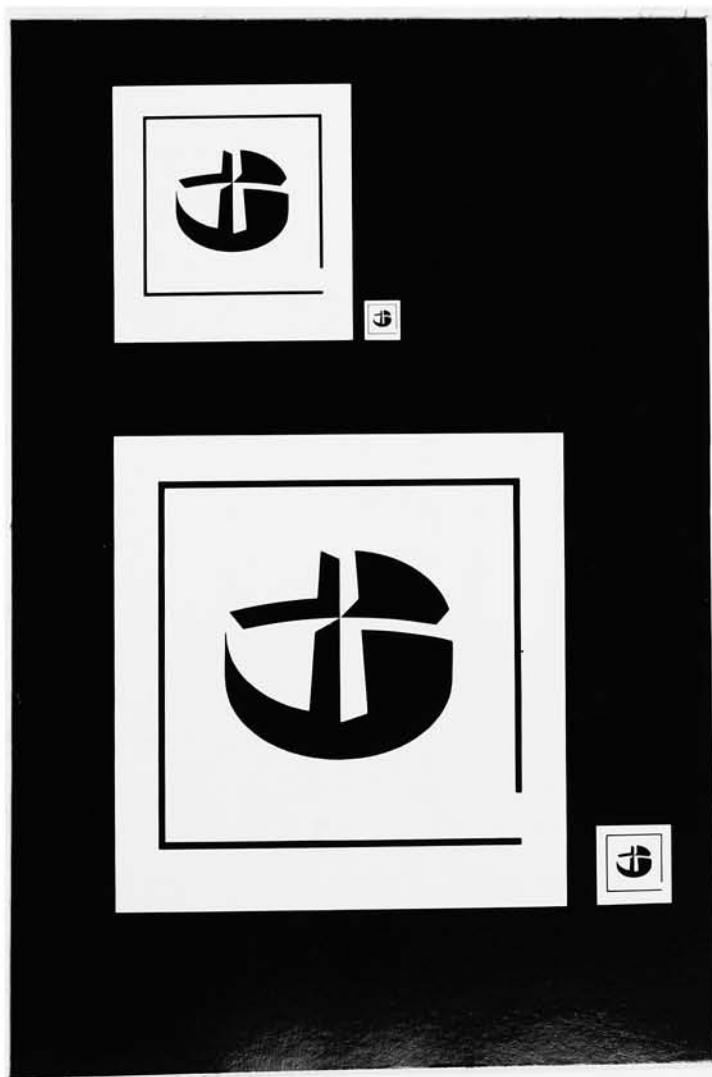


M.

I varied the thickness of the line or lines and their configuration. A relatively fine line was chosen because it aided in setting priorities within the symbol, i.e. the pill being of primary importance and the line secondary to it. At this point I had sent samples of the different symbols to the United Nations and INCB in Geneva. They believed that a single line and not two best conveyed their function. For them the line suggested enclosure, containment, or the very function of their organization, control. The line also showed the drug to be regulated, not completely neutralized, and that was important! Additionally, the one outlet in the line represents the controlled and limited flow of the drug to the legitimate market (medical and scientific).

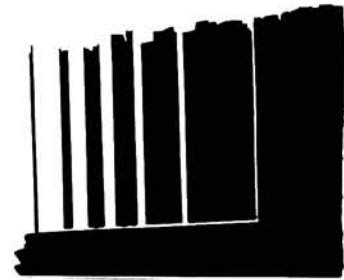
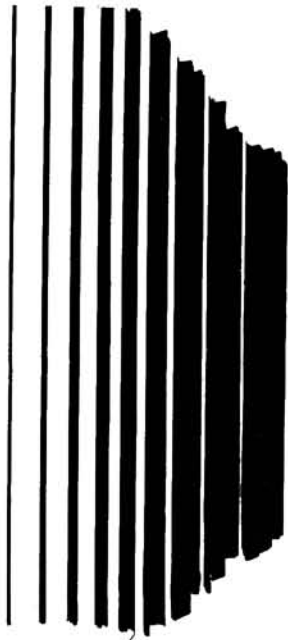
After many drawings using color in some part of the symbol, I settled on black and white for the following reasons; black and white are often associated with "good" and "bad". The drugs controlled by the INCB also have a constructive (good) and abused (bad) aspect to them. The black and white also reflects the dead-serious nature of international drug

abuse and the efforts of the INCB to combat it. Also the black and white created a particular startling and severe effect which suited the organization, a phenomenon which would have been denied to color. In addition to this, the INCB also preferred it for practical and idealistic reasons such as those just stated.

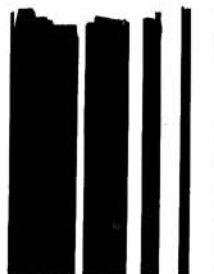
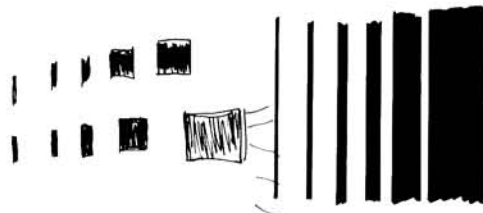


N.

On the less used applications such as the brochure and poster I have used color in a limited fashion and for specific reasons. The use of color in a large area of black catches the eye and introduces the viewer to the new symbol. Red was the best choice for an object that may represent danger. This limited use of color in specific applications offers a pleasing highlight to the surrounding black and white. Those surrounding intervals of black and white are variations on the line used in the symbol. They indicate a series of carefully prescribed channels, i.e. the controlling and monitoring mechanism of the INCB, the pill must follow to obtain an exit. This variation of the symbol is used to further acquaint the viewer with the INCB's new identity.



O.



P.

TECHNICAL ASPECTS

An organizational Graphic Design system is utilized in each application. The basic unit of the grid was dictated by the amount of copy I was given to work with for the brochure. This amount of copy worked best with a 9/10 measure and this, in intervals of five, became the basis for each application including the poster. The line length was eighteen picas.

Helvetica type was chosen for its neat and serious appearance. Light, regular, and semi-bold faces were used to direct the eye to areas of importance and also to create an interesting and appropriate application.

The typesetting was done in the Machine and Photo Composition area in the RIT School of Printing.

All photostats were developed on Kodak PMT paper using a Robertson vertical camera in the Communication Design Media Center.

Photographs were taken with an Olympus OM-1 (35mm) camera using Kodak Tri-X and Kodak High Contrast Copy Film. All were processed and printed in the Photography Department at RIT.

Since all applications are to be forwarded to the United Nations, Geneva, Switzerland, all measurements for the applications were established based on the Metric System.

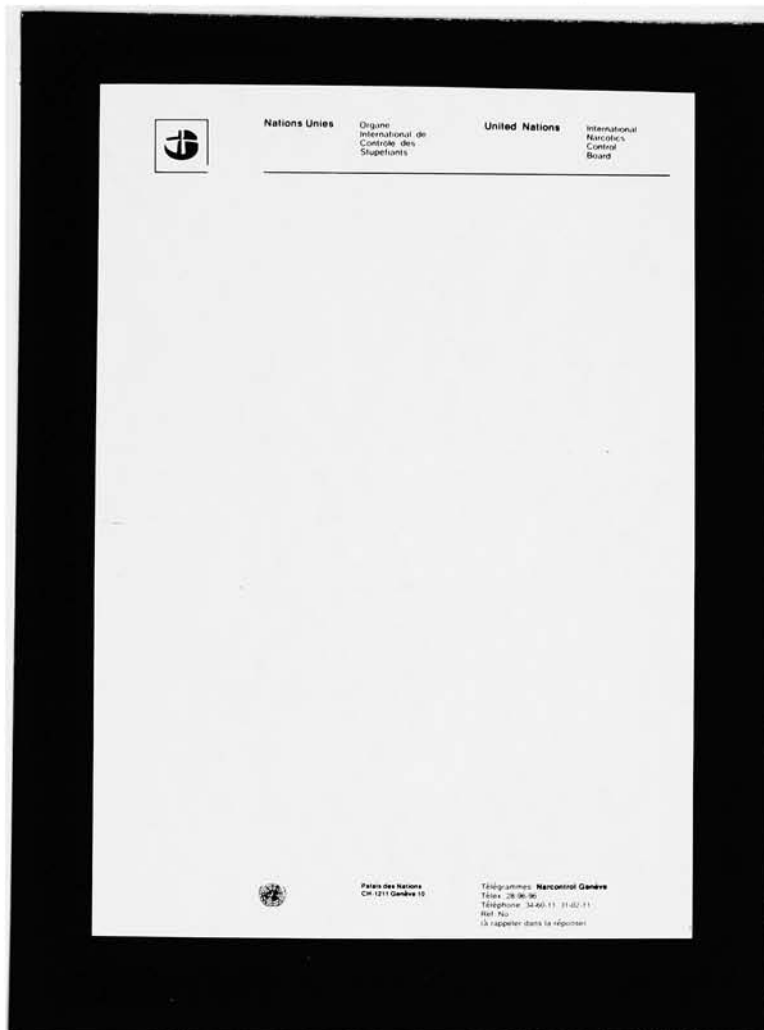
The following dimensions are given in centimeters.

Brochure:	10 X 21
Letterhead:	21 X 29.5
Envelope:	22.5 X 11.5
Business Card:	6 X 10
Poster:	58 X 38

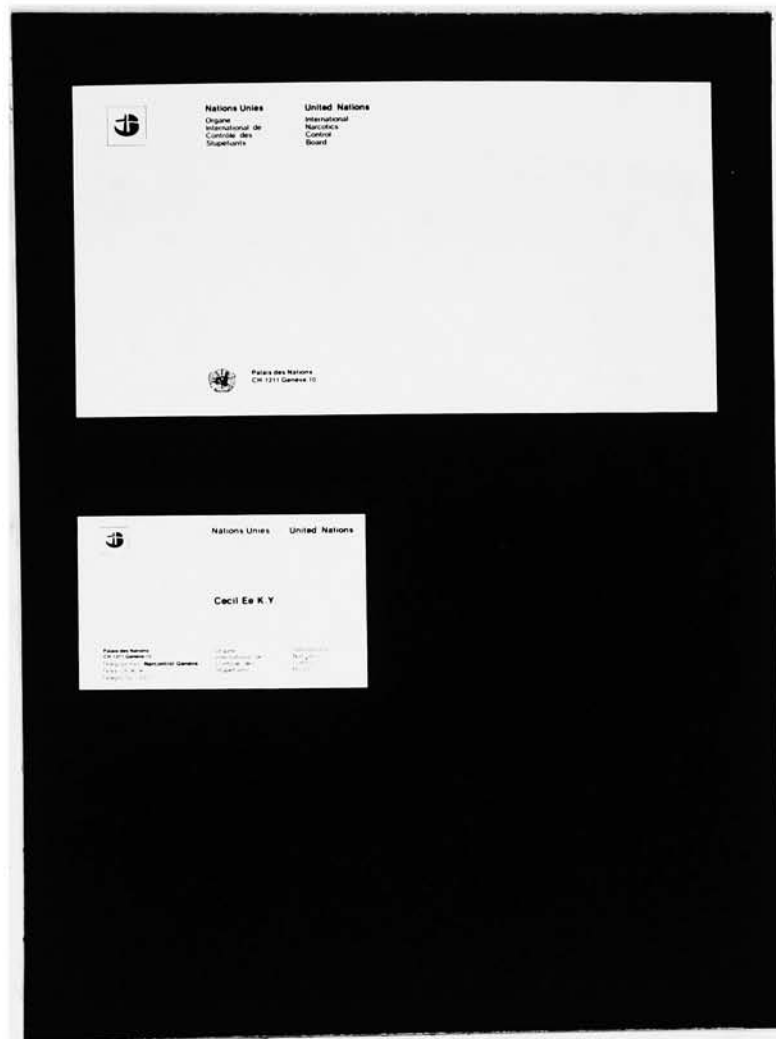
CONCLUSION

After many overseas phone calls from the United Nations, I am pleased to report that the INCB is delighted with the results of the entire design program. More than having designed a program which is appreciated by the client, I feel that my involvement with the International Organization has educated, and in some cases introduced for the first time, many people to the profession of Graphic Design.

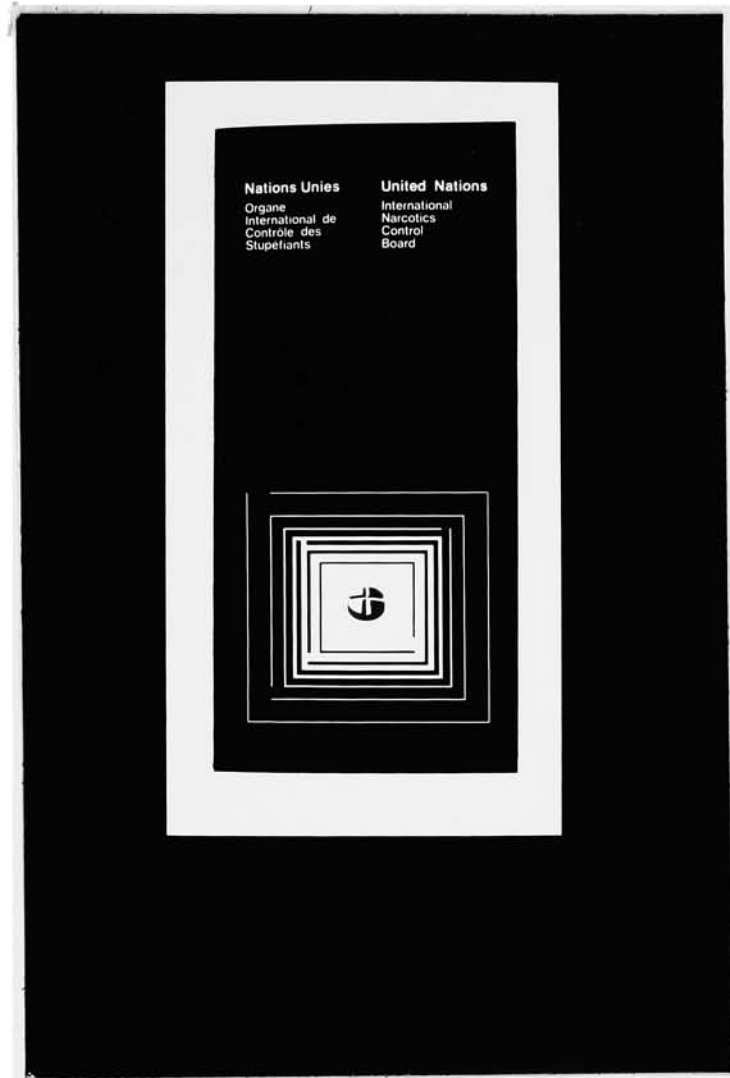
APPENDIX I



Q.



R.





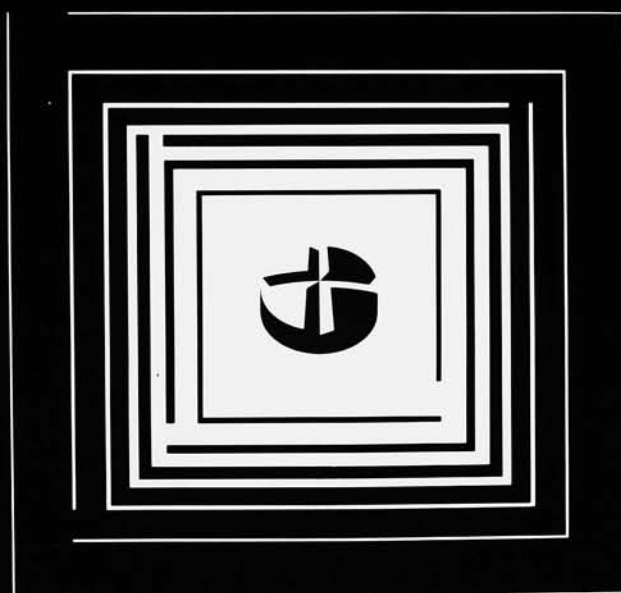
Palais des Nations
CH-1211 Genève 10

Nations Unies

Organe
International de
Contrôle des
Stupéfiants

United Nations

International
Narcotics
Control
Board



V.

APPENDIX II

68% of original

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APPENDIX III A History of the INCB

The following are excerpts, sometimes paraphrased and condensed, from an INCB publication.

The control of dangerous drugs has been the focus of substantial attention on the part of Governments and the public in recent years. The interest and concern over the misuse of dependence-producing substances has reached such proportions as to gain a high priority in the minds of officials and professions in many countries throughout the world. Concern and international action against drug abuse may be traced back to the early years of the 20th Century. The almost epidemic dimensions of the problem, however, have now become increasingly recognized, thus providing an important impetus for even more effective control of narcotics and of other dangerous drugs both at the national and international level.

A historical view permits one to see that, while recently greatly stimulated by public concern and governmental pressure, multilateral efforts to cope with the threats posed by drug abuse date back to the beginning of the century. In the latter part of the 19th Century, a number of countries had substantial opium and morphine addict populations. As is well known, China and the United States were among those countries. The desire to reduce drug misuse led to the convening of a conference in Shanghai in 1909 of 13 of the more important countries of the world. The meeting resulted in the publication of 9 resolutions mainly concerned with the opium problems in China. At that time Governments were not ready to assume contractual obligations and a formal convention was not signed.

The series of international treaties, prepared by national representatives to bring narcotic and other dangerous drugs under international control, actually began with the 1912 Convention adopted at the Hague. One characteristic of all international conventions has been their cumulative effect together with the progressive expansion in their objectives and in the area of responsibility

entrusted to the international organs involved. The guiding principle of the international control treaties, already anchored in the 1912 Opium Convention, has been to regulate the production of and trade in narcotics so as to limit their supply to medical and scientific needs. While expanded to include other such drugs as the psychotropics (LSD etc.), this has remained the cardinal principle and the major objective of the drug control treaties.

The 1912 Convention, which limited the use of morphine, heroin and cocaine, imposed specific restrictions on international trade in these substances and in opium, and required Parties to establish national bodies to control the production and disposition of opium, was about to enter into force when World War I broke out.

The Treaty of Versailles made the League of Nations responsible for ensuring the application of that convention and, since then, international action in the field of drug control has been coordinated under the auspices of the League and its successor, the United Nations.

In 1925 an agreement was signed whereby the manufacture of prepared opium for sale was to be a government monopoly. This was followed by the 1925 Geneva Convention which established a system of import certificates and export authorizations for the international trade in narcotic drugs. The 1925 Convention created the first international organ to supervise the implementation of the treaty and to suggest measures against the illicit traffic in narcotics throughout the world. Members of this Permanent Central Board, the predecessor of the International Narcotics Control Board, served in their individual capacity independent from their governments and were in fact selected on the basis of their personal qualifications. The same is true of the INCB today. The creation of such an international organ marks an important step in the desired global approach to problems which indeed assume global proportions.

There were many protocols after these. With the 1953 Protocol there were nine major international agreements in the field of drug control. It became apparent that it would be desirable to simplify

and codify their provisions into a single convention which would at the same time complete and increase the effectiveness of the international drug control system.

In 1961 in New York City the Single Convention on narcotic drugs was adopted. The International Narcotics Control Board, which consists of 13 independent members, was created by the 1961 Single Convention to replace the Permanent Central Narcotics Board and the Drug Supervisory Body. The INCB began operations in March 1968 in accordance with a decision taken by the Economic and Social Council.

The international drug control system is basically one of indirect administration depending for its success on the active goodwill of Governments in applying the provision of the relevant treaties. To be effective drug control must by definition be as international and universal as possible. In this connection, the Board receives statistical data from 190 countries and territories throughout the world.

The INCB's major tasks consist of the following;

- 1.) Coordinating and guiding positive national efforts towards the increased effectiveness of the international drug control system.
- 2.) Analysing in detail the substantive information submitted by Governments under the treaties and reported by various official agencies.
- 3.) Evaluating the drug estimates and statistical returns to help determine the global and national needs for narcotic drugs under international control and...
- 4.) Help national authorities as necessary to comply more effectively with the requirements of the international agreements in the field of drug control.

The gradual expansion in the scope of international bodies has culminated in a series of amendments known as the 1972 Protocol. A central aim of this Protocol is to increase the capability of international organs, especially The Board, to be of service in assisting Governments in implementing the existing drug control treaties.

